

HANDOUT 13

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL SELF-REFLECTION: LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES

Purpose	School principals in chronically low-performing schools can complete this reflection to identify ways to modify their existing leadership strategies to fit school needs and school improvement plans.
Materials	None
Media	None
Topic	Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools
Practice	Improved Leadership

School Principal Self-Reflection: Leadership Strategies

This tool is broken into three main sections: Communication with Staff, Instructional Leadership, and Connections with Key Stakeholders. Principals are encouraged to look for patterns in their responses, and identify clusters that indicate their personal style, strengths, and weaknesses.

For each statement, principals can mark “Yes,” “Not Consistently,” or “Not Applicable.” The right-most column, “Improvement Action,” can be completed both for statements marked as not being currently practiced as well as for those leadership actions that are in place and that the principal would like to further refine and improve.

When marking an improvement action, a principal should consider what is important for the school and will have a positive effect. Once areas for improvement have been identified, we suggest consulting with turnaround specialists and watching related media in the DWW *Learn What Works* and *See How It Works* sections.

Principal Name: _____

School: _____

Date: _____

School Principal Self-Reflection: Leadership Strategies				
Do you. . .	Yes	Not Consistently	Not Applicable ¹	Improvement Action
A. Communication with Staff				
A1. Communicate Direction and Decision-Making Processes				
1. Communicate on a regular basis what the school needs are and what steps are needed to make changes?				
2. Communicate priorities for change (e.g., communicate that literacy is a priority in the current year)?				
3. Communicate often and clearly to all staff that change is not optional?				

¹ Some of these strategies may be carried out by school leaders other than the Principal, such as the Vice Principal or an Instructional Leader.

School Principal Self-Reflection: Leadership Strategies				
Do you. . .	Yes	Not Consistently	Not Applicable ¹	Improvement Action
4. Communicate to staff how you plan to form partnerships and connections with the community and parents?				
5. Communicate to staff what are the reasons for decisions (e.g., the schedule was changed to allow more time for literacy instruction)?				
6. Have an open door policy in place to allow staff to share concerns and ideas any time they feel the need to talk?				
7. Inform teachers how their input will be used for furthering school improvement?				
8. Provide to all staff clear and detailed information about the short-term and long-term goals of the turnaround process (e.g., describe anticipated accomplishment by the end of the second semester)?				
9. Model and encourage the use of data to guide instructional decisions.				
A2. Guide and Encourage Staff				
1. Often use positive language to encourage staff?				
2. Reassure teachers that anxiety as part of a turnaround process is a natural and very common response and work with teachers to overcome anxiety?				
3. Set clear expectations for staff instructional strategies?				

School Principal Self-Reflection: Leadership Strategies				
Do you. . .	Yes	Not Consistently	Not Applicable ¹	Improvement Action
4. Set clear expectations for interpersonal interaction of staff with staff, students, and parents?				
5. Use multiple modes of communication to guide and encourage staff (e.g., individual meetings, team meetings, emails, newsletters)?				
A3. Use Multiple Channels of Communication				
1. Use department chairs and instructional leaders to help collect data about staff attitudes and concerns?				
2. Use shared leadership practices (for example, establish a literacy leadership team and assign the team the responsibility of identifying and addressing literacy needs)?				
3. Find regular forums and creative ways to recognize staff for their achievements?				
4. Provide a safe environment in which teachers can consult with you about problems or challenges they are having?				
B. Instructional Leadership				
B1. Observe, Model, and Co-Teach				
1. Spend most of the school day walking the halls, observing instruction, and interacting with teachers and students?				
2. Model instructional strategies in the classroom?				

School Principal Self-Reflection: Leadership Strategies				
Do you. . .	Yes	Not Consistently	Not Applicable ¹	Improvement Action
3. Create observational tools and forms to assess alignment of teachers' instruction with the school's turnaround approach?				
4. Serve as a role model for teaching and coaching?				
B2. Support Professional Development and Growth Opportunities				
1. Join teachers in professional development seminars and workshops?				
2. Expand your knowledge by attending training outside school and consulting with outside experts, and then share the knowledge with staff?				
3. Plan and support regular professional development meetings for the staff?				
4. Incorporate research-based strategies into professional development for staff (for example, by providing articles in newsletters, inviting a guest speaker, or providing books and articles to staff)?				
5. Track staff professional growth and discuss professional development opportunities with staff?				
6. Encourage an environment of collaborative inquiry and planning?				
7. Encourage teachers to take risks, try new instructional strategies, and propose instructional innovations in their classrooms?				

School Principal Self-Reflection: Leadership Strategies				
Do you. . .	Yes	Not Consistently	Not Applicable ¹	Improvement Action
8. Initiate discussions with teachers about indicators for success and how to measure student academic and behavioral progress?				
9. Align teachers' performance evaluation with the direction of the school turnaround approach?				
10. Initiate discussion around a reexamination of policies regarding students' grades and graduation requirements?				
C. Connections with Stakeholders				
1. Work to identify key stakeholders in your community?				
2. Conduct regular meetings with parents and/or members of the community to explain about the school needs, goals, processes, and progress?				
3. Regularly inform parents about the school priorities and new policies?				
4. Propose and provide multiple opportunities to parents and local businesses and organizations to contribute to the school?				
5. Regularly collect data from parents and community members for decision-making?				
6. Inform parents and community members how their input was or will be used for school improvement?				

School Principal Self-Reflection: Leadership Strategies				
Do you. . .	Yes	Not Consistently	Not Applicable ¹	Improvement Action
7. Find out how the school can contribute to families and the community (for example, by conducting family nights to provide training about effective math learning strategies)?				
8. Find regular forums and creative ways to recognize parents and community members for their contribution to the school?				
9. Support mechanisms in the school that enable a good and regular communication between the school and the community (for example, support parent organizations and initiatives)?				